

100 Top Motivational Speakers Every Meeting Planner, Event Planner, and Conference Planner Should Know About.

By Jamie Turner and the International Speakers Association





What is a Motivational Speaker?

If you're like most people, you think a motivational speaker is someone who is a high-energy speaker who excels at getting salespeople fired up -- but that's not always the case.

As a professional speaker myself, I define a motivational speaker as *someone who changes the state of the people in the audience.*

Yes, sometimes that means a high-energy, inspirational speaker. But other times, it can mean someone who creates a sense of emotion and meaning for the audience. And still other times, it can mean someone who shares a business insight with an audience that gets them to change the way they lead their organization or their team.



Jamie Turner is an internationally recognized author, speaker and TV news contributor.

Not long after re-framing what it means to be a motivational speaker, I launched the International Speakers Association as a way to promote the world's best speakers from around the globe.

The first thing we did was to spend six months emailing several thousand meeting planners, event planners, and conference planners and asked them to name the top speakers they had come across in their careers.



I also did in-depth research of my own and sorted through hundreds of different speaker websites.

Finally, I connected with other speakers and asked them for their input.

What follows are the results of the first annual International Speakers Association Top 100 Motivational Speakers Award, which is based on both qualitative and quantitative research as well as my own experience. Ready to check out the winners? If so, read on.

Sincerely,

Jamie Turner

Author, Speaker, and Founder of the International Speakers Association

Top 100 Motivational Speakers for 2018

[Ashley Rhodes-Courter](#) has a very inspirational story that's worth checking out. She was born to a single teen mother in 1985 and would spend the next decade of her life in foster care in 14 homes before being adopted at the age of twelve. Ashley excelled in school and realized early on that she was compelled to advocate for adoption. In 2003, the New York Times Magazine published her grand prize winning essay about her adoption day, which she has since expanded into a memoir, *Three Little Words*. This memoir is currently being made into a major motion picture.

[Alex Pattakos](#) served as an advisor to the White House under three U.S. presidents and to the commissioner of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. A prolific author, he has written two international best-selling books on the human quest for Meaning, *The OPA! Way*, inspired by Greek philosophy, mythology, and culture, and *Prisoners of Our Thoughts*, written at the personal urging of the world-renowned psychiatrist, Dr. Viktor Frankl (author of the classic bestseller, *Man's Search for Meaning*). Now Alex has founded the Global Meaning Institute "to help people discover new meaning in their lives and work, and at a systems level, connect to the deeper meaning in organizations, communities, and societies."

Amy Jo Martin is a New York Times bestselling author of *Renegades Write the Rules* and podcast host of the Why Not Now? series. Amy Jo's motto: "Humans connect with humans, not logos," has allowed her to work closely with high level brands such as Hilton Worldwide and celebrities such as Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson and Shaquille O'Neal. Martin currently has a social media following of more than 1.1 million, and was named the third most powerful woman on Twitter by Forbes.

Andrea Vahl is a Social Media Consultant and Speaker who helps business owners leverage social media and use it to grow their business. Vahl is the co-author of *Facebook Marketing All-in-One for Dummies* as well as the Community Manager for the Social Media Examiner for 2 years. Vahl also co-founded the Social Media Manager School, a course that has taught over 1400 people the art of social media and how to start a business.

Andrew Davis is an internationally acclaimed keynote speaker and bestselling author. Davis co-founded, built, and sold a digital marketing agency and in 2016, founded Monumental Shift, the world's first talent agency for thought leaders in marketing. I've seen Andrew speak and he's one of the best. If you're looking for an upbeat, high-energy speaker to talk about business and marketing, be sure to include him on your list.

[Ann Handley](#) is best known for creating and managing digital content in an effort to build relationships or organizations and individuals. Handley is a Wall Street Journal bestseller of *Everybody Writes: Your Go-To Guide to Creating Ridiculously Good Content*. She is a LinkedIn Influencer, keynote speaker, and Chief Content Officer of MarketingProfs. I know Ann personally and can tell you that she has an excellent reputation as a top-notch professional who delivers the goods.

[Anthony Bourke](#) is a veteran F-16 fighter pilot with more than 2,700 hours of flight time. Following his military career, Bourke went on to become the top producing mortgage banker in the Western US for a lending institution. As Founder & CEO of Mach 2 Consulting, Bourke uses his tactical knowledge from the military and business expertise to help business owners in the management training world.

[Apollo Robbins](#) first made national news as the man who pick-pocketed the Secret Service while entertaining former U.S. president Jimmy Carter. Forbes has called him “an artful manipulator of awareness,” and Wired Magazine has written that “he could steal the wallet of a man who knew he was going to have his pocket picked.” Robbins uses his expertise to demonstrate perception management, diversion techniques, and self-deception. Robbins has been featured in *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles*

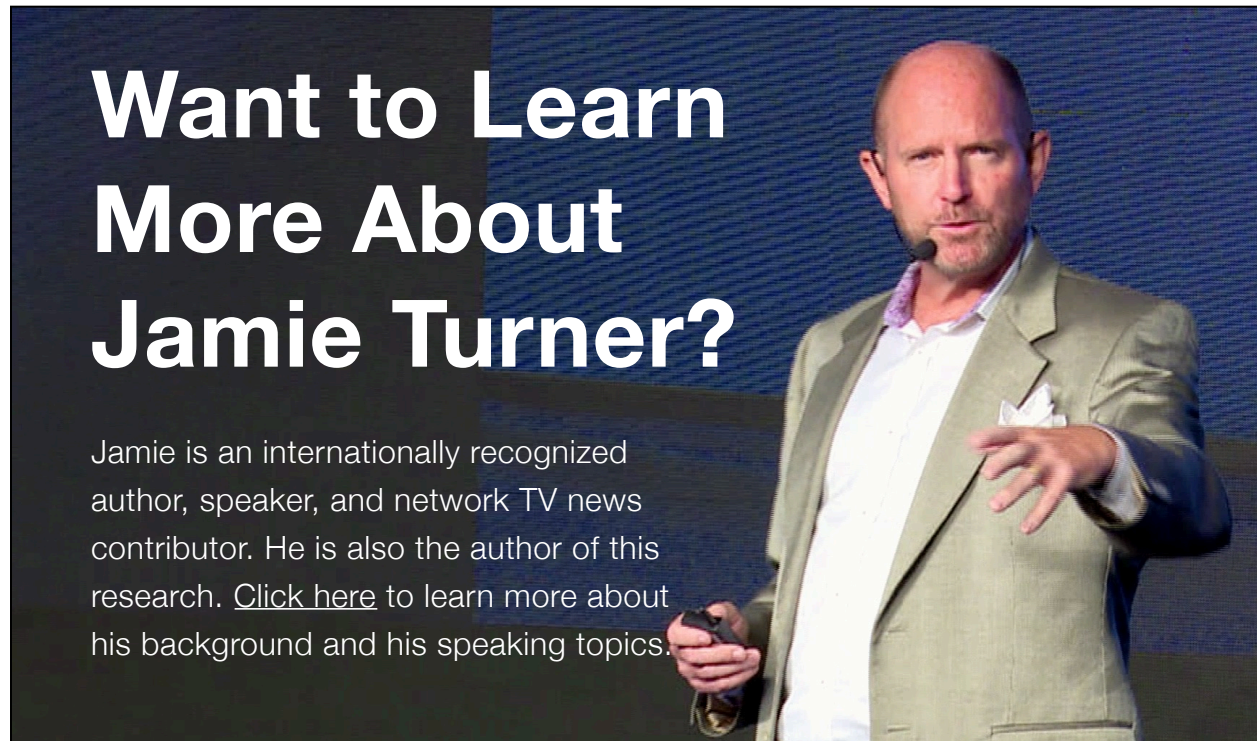
Times, and *The Wall Street Journal*. And his appearance on *The Today Show* has more than 7 million views on YouTube.

Aron Ralston was an experienced outdoorsman when, in a remote area of Utah's canyon country, he accidentally dislodged a boulder that crushed and pinned his right hand in 2003. Ralston was trapped for six days before he freed himself with a multi-tool knife and hiked to his rescue. Since, Aron has written an internationally bestselling book, *Between a Rock and a Hard Place*, spoken all around the world, and designed his own prosthetic arm.

Benjamin Zander is not someone who you would normally consider a top motivational speaker – his day job is as the conductor of The Boston Philharmonic Orchestra and a guest conductor around the world. But the maestro was mentioned in our research, so we're adding him here. For 30 years, Zander worked as the Artistic Director of the joint program between The Walnut Hill School for the Performing Arts and New England Conservatory's Preparatory School. Additionally, Zander is one of the most sought after speakers in the world, giving the opening and closing Keynote address at the World Economic Forum.

Bo Eason started his career as a top pick for the Houston Oilers in the NFL. In 2001, Eason wrote and performed a one-man play, *Runt of the Litter*, that toured in over 50 cities. Since then, Eason

has dedicated his career to helping others recognize the power of their personal story and become effective communicators.



Want to Learn More About Jamie Turner?

Jamie is an internationally recognized author, speaker, and network TV news contributor. He is also the author of this research. [Click here](#) to learn more about his background and his speaking topics.

Find out more about Jamie Turner and his speaking topics by [clicking here](#).

[Bob Burg](#) is best known for his books *Endless Referrals* and *The Go-Giver*. *The Go-Giver* is a *Wall Street Journal* and *Business Week* bestseller, and has sold more than 650,000 copies. Additionally, Burg has written a number of other books on the topics of sales, marketing and influence. I've interviewed Bob for my podcast and got to know him during the interview. I can personally tell you that Bob is smart, at the top of his game, and provides some terrific insights into business and life.

[Brene Brown](#) is a research professor at the University of Houston and has spent the past sixteen years extensively studying

courage, vulnerability, shame, and empathy. Brown is the author of three #1 New York Times bestsellers – *Daring Greatly*, *Rising Strong*, and *The Gifts of Imperfection*. Her TED talk – The Power of Vulnerability – has over 30 million views and remains one of the top five most viewed TED talks in the world.

Brian Dodd is the author of *The 10 Indispensable Practices of the 2-Minute Leader* and the Director of New Ministry Relationships for Injoy Stewardship Solutions where, over the last 14 years, he has spent each day having one-on-one conversations with the greatest church leaders in America. Dodd teaches individuals to take everyday life experiences and process them in leadership.

Brian Tracy is Chairman and CEO of Brian Tracy International, a business that specializes in training and developing individuals and organizations to help achieve their personal and business goals faster and easier than ever. Tracy has more than 30 years of extensive knowledge in the fields of economics, history, business, philosophy, and psychology. He has spoken to more than 5,000,000 people worldwide and addresses more than 250,000 people each year.

Cameron Russell has spent the past fifteen years working as a model for brands such as Calvin Klein, Prada, Vogue and Elle. Her TED talk on the power of image has over 18 million views and remains one of the top ten most popular talks of all time. Russell

has dedicated much of her career to speaking on important topics such as climate change, race, and gender equality. She is one of the lead organizers for Model Mafia, a network of over 400 fashion models working towards a more equitable and sustainable industry.

Carmine Gallo is an internationally recognized keynote speaker, advisor, and bestselling author. Gallo is the author of eight books and has been named by The Huffington Post as one of the top ten influence experts. He has advised executives for some of the world's largest brands including: Allstate, Berkshire Hathaway, Chevron, Coca-Cola, Disney, and others.

Carol Roth has more than 20 years experience as a business advisor, investor, speaker and *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Entrepreneur Equation*. Roth has worked with hundreds of companies and has helped her clients complete over \$2 billion in deal transactions collectively. She also works for a number of companies and brands looking to reach a larger audience as a brand spokesperson, ambassador and influencer.

Chad Cooper is an author, a mentor, and a platinum coach for the Robbins Research International Organization. He coaches across several fields including leadership, finances, business, athletics, and energy. Cooper is a published author, missionary leader, business owner, and former United States Marine of the

Year. I know Chad personally – in fact, he’s my executive coach – and I can tell you from personal experience that Chad provides more meaningful insights than just about any other coach I know.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie was born and raised in Nigeria and has since had her work translated into thirty languages. She is the author of *Purple Hibiscus*, *Half of a Yellow Sun* and *The Thing Around Your Neck*, which collectively won the Commonwealth Writers’ Prize, the Orange Prize, and a National Book Critics Circle Award finalist. Her most recent novel *Americanah* won The Chicago Tribune Heartland Prize for Fiction and was named one of the The New York Times ten best books of the year in 2013.

Chris Brogan is a New York Times bestselling author of nine books, as well as a professional speaker. He has worked with some of the worlds biggest brands including Disney, Google, GM, Humana Health, and many more. Brogan also appeared on Tony Robbins Internet Money Masters series, and was listed by Forbes as one of the Must Follow Marketing Minds of 2014. I’ve seen Chris speak, and know him as a good acquaintance, and can vouch for his natural, approachable persona on stage and in front of audiences.

Dan Pontefract is the author of THE PURPOSE EFFECT: Building Meaning in Yourself, Your Role and Your Organization as well as FLAT ARMY: Creating a Connected and Engaged Organization.

A renowned speaker, Dan has presented at multiple TED events and also writes for Forbes, Harvard Business Review, Psychology Today and The Huffington Post. Dan and his wife, Denise, have three young children (aka goats) and live in Victoria, Canada. He is also an Adjunct Professor at the University of Victoria. His next book, OPEN to THINK, publishes in 2018.

Daniel Pink is a New York Times bestselling author of *A Whole New Mind*, *Drive*, and *To Sell is Human*. His books have sold more than 2 million copies worldwide and been translated into 35 languages. Pink's TED talk on the science of motivation has more than 19 million views and ranked as one of the 10 most-watched TED talks of all time.

Daniel Burrus is a highly recognized keynote speaker, business strategist and global futurist. Burrus has been referred to as one of the top three business gurus by *The New York Times*, and considered one of the World's Leading Futurists on Global Trends and Innovation. He is the author of seven books, including *Flash Foresight*, a *New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal* bestseller.

Darren Shaw is a widely recognized SEO specialist and founder of Whitespark, a web design and development company. In 2010, the launch of the Local Citation Finder and the Local Rank Tracker led Whitespark to focus primarily on SEO. Darren has a passion

for local SEO and has been working in the industry for over 17 years.

[Dave Kerpen](#) is the founder and CEO of Likeable Local, as well as the cofounder and chairman of Likeable Media. Likeable Local is a social media software company geared toward small businesses, whereas Likeable Media is a social media and content marketing agency. Kerpen has three New York Times bestselling books, *Likeable Social Media: How to Delight Your Customers*, *Create an Irresistible Brand*, and *Be Generally Amazing on Facebook and Other Social Networks*, *Likeable Business* and *Likeable Leadership*. Dave is a friend of mine and I've seen him speak. He's engaging, transparent (not in a literal sense), and approachable – a top-notch speaker all the way around.

[David Blaine](#) is a globally recognized magician who was mentioned in our research. Normally, I wouldn't include someone who is a pure magician on this list, but he was mentioned in the research, so we've included him here. David first aired his own series, *Street Magic*, on ABC at the age of twenty-three. He spent one week submerged in an aquarium at Lincoln Center and soon became one of the most widely searched names on Google.

[David Gallo](#) is best known as a visual storyteller and award-winning scenic designer. His work is displayed in more than a dozen cities worldwide. Gallo was awarded a Tony for Best Scenic De-

sign for *The Drowsy Chaperone* and also received the Obie for Sustained Excellence in Set Design, Drama Desk, Lucille Lortel, American Theater Wing, Hewes Design, Ovation and LA Critics Circle awards.

David Meerman Scott is a three-time bestselling author and internationally acclaimed strategist who helps people, products, and organizations stand out. Author of *The New Rules of Marketing and PR*, now in its 6th edition, has been translated into 29 languages. Scott serves as an advisor to help emerging companies working to transform their industries by providing products and services to them. David and I have both spoken at Tony Robbins' events and I know him personally – he's smart, thoughtful, and provides great insights into business and marketing.

Daymond John is an entrepreneur, New York Times bestselling author, branding guru, and motivational speaker. John became a pioneer in the fashion industry after he turned a \$40 budget into FUBU, a now \$6 billion brand. Most recently, Barack Obama assigned John a Presidential Ambassador for Global Entrepreneurship, which focuses on promoting the importance of global entrepreneurship.

Deborah Gardner is a swimming champion turned author and competition catalyst. Better known by many Fortune 500 companies as the Pit Bull in a Skirt, Deborah is rising to international

prominence with her entertaining, humorous, captivating sassy presentation style. Whether it's a keynote, master class, workshop or a training program, Deborah provides the most relevant, up-to-date practices using real-life stories and examples in a conversational, interactive way for instant results.

Douglas Contant is a New York Times bestselling author, business leader, keynote speaker, and social media influencer. Contant has over 40 years of experience in leadership with global companies and excelled in senior level leadership positions – first as the President of Nabisco Foods Company, then as CEO of Campbell Soup Company, and lastly as Chairman of Avon Products. In 2011, he founded ConantLeadership, a community of mission-driven leaders and learners.

Dov Baron is a speaker for global conferences and touches on a variety of topics such as leadership, influence, business, and more. Baron has been speaking for over 30 years internationally and was recognized by Inc. Magazine as one of the Top 100 Leadership Speakers to hire. He is a bestselling author of several books including *Fiercely Loyal: How High Performing Companies Develop and Retain Top Talent*.

Elizabeth Gilbert began her career as a journalist for publications such as Spin, GQ, and The New York Times Magazine. Although, Gilbert is best known for her 2006 memoir, EAT PRAY

LOVE, which followed her journey around the world after her divorce. EAT PRAY LOVE became an international bestseller, with over 10 million copies sold worldwide and, in 2010, was made into a film starring Julia Roberts.

Erik Qualman is a #1 bestselling author and motivational keynote speaker with a reach of more than 25 million people across 49 countries. His book *Digital Leader* made him the 2nd Most Likeable Author in the world. Qualman was named by Forbes as a Top 50 Digital Influencer. I know Erik and have seen him speak – he’s approachable, friendly, and provides some excellent insights about business and marketing. His presentations are very interactive and audiences always come away having learned important things that they can apply to their jobs the very next day.

Gary Guller discovered his passion for alpine climbing shortly before losing the use of his arm in a mountaineering accident. Since, Guller has become a leader of the largest cross-disability group to reach Mt Everest Base Camp, at 17,500 feet. Guller is best known as a record-setting mountaineer and professional keynote speaker. He speaks on topics such as effective teamwork and leadership, diversity, transformational leadership, and communication.

Gary Hamel is known as “the world’s leading expert in business strategy,” by Fortune Magazine. Hamel has worked with the top leading companies around the world and is one of the most influ-

ential business thinkers. Through his work, he has led efforts in some of the most notable companies to create billions of dollars in shareholder value.

Gary Vaynerchuk established one of the first ecommerce wine stores in the late 90's, WineLibrary, growing the business from \$4 million to \$60 million in sales. Vaynerchuk is the CEO and co-founder of VaynerMedia, a full-service digital agency, 4-time New York Times bestselling author. He's a bit controversial -- lots of F-bombs on stage -- but some audiences love that.

Ian Cleary is one of the more engaging, friendly, and inspiring marketing speakers you'll ever see. He comes in prepared, and has a knack for taking his warm Irish-ness and translating it into a fun, thought provoking talk. I've seen Ian speak and he's the real deal – fun, charming, and content rich.

Jack Canfield is an award-winning speaker and leader in personal development and strategy. Canfield specializes in teaching entrepreneurs, corporate leaders, and educators how to create the life they desire. He is the author and co-author of more than 150 books, 66 of which are bestsellers. In 2014, SUCCESS magazine named Canfield One of the Most Influential Leaders in Personal Growth and Achievement.

Jamie Turner is an internationally recognized author, speaker and TV news contributor who has helped The Coca-Cola Company,

AT&T, Holiday Inn, and others solve complex business problems. He is consistently ranked as the top speaker at the events, conferences, and trade shows he speaks at, and is the founder of a business blog that is read by hundreds of thousands of people around the globe. Jamie is the author of *How to Make Money with Social Media*, which has been published in a variety of languages around the globe, and *Go Mobile*, which was the #1 bestselling book about mobile when it was first released. He has been profiled in one of the world's best selling college textbooks and travels the globe speaking about business, leadership, and branding. (Side note: You're on Jamie's website right now. Have a look around!)

Jason Dorsey is best known as a Millennials and generations expert and has been featured on *60 Minutes*, *20/20*, *The Today Show*, and many more. As the #1 generations speaker, Dorsey receives over 1,000 speaking requests each year. He wrote his first bestselling book at age 18, with his most recent bestselling book being *Y-Size Your Business: How Gen Y Employees Can Save You Money and Grow Your Business*.

Jay Baer has 23 years' experience in digital marketing and customer experience for top level companies. His second book, *Youtility: Why Smart Marketing is About Help not Hype*, ranked #3 on the New York Times business bestseller list. Baer speaks

worldwide on how businesspeople can use the ever-changing technology landscape to their advantage.

[Jeffery Hayzlett](#) is a global businessman, speaker, bestselling author, and Chairman of C-Suite Network. Hayzlett is the author of three bestselling business books, *Running the Gauntlet*, *The Mirror Test*, and *Think Big, Act Bigger*. As a leading business expert, he has been recognized in Forbes, SUCCESS, Mashable, Marketing Week and Chief Executive. I was interviewed on the radio with Jeffery as the other guest and can say from firsthand experience that and he's the real deal -- smart, engaging, and firing on all cylinders.

[Jeremie Kubicek](#) trains leaders to become productive and effective businesspeople. *Making Your Leadership Come Alive*, Kubicek's first book, became a Wall Street Journal bestseller. As the former CEO of Leadercast, Catalyst and the John Maxwell training companies, and current CEO of GiANT Worldwide, Kubicek speaks all across the US and Europe.

[Jillian Michaels](#) is author of eight New York Times bestselling books, host of an award-winning podcast, creator of a personal training app, and motivational speaker. Michaels has a following of over 100 million across her social media platforms and her personal website. Her passion for healthy living stems from a childhood of being overweight, and now Michaels wants to share her

passion and advice with the world. She was mentioned several times by people who responded to our survey.

[Jill Bolte Taylor](#) is a neuroanatomist who experienced a rare form of stroke in 1996 that left her unable to walk, talk, read, or write. Eight years later, Taylor made a complete recovery and author of the New York Times bestselling memoir *My Stroke of Insight: A Brain Scientist's Personal Journey*. Her TED talk of her story became the first TED talk to go viral on the internet in 2008, landing her as one of TIME Magazine's 100 Most Influential People in the World. I've had the pleasure of watching her [TED talk](#), twice! If you haven't seen it already, it's 20 minutes worth investing. I highly recommend it.

[Joe Calloway](#) is a keynote speaker who provides workshops and presentations to help develop leaders, improve performance for businesses, and create more effective teams. Calloway has worked with top level companies including Proctor & Gamble, Coca-Cola, and Cadillac. He is an Executive In Residence at Belmont University's Center for Entrepreneurship, a program featured in Fortune Magazine.

[Jon Gordon](#) is a bestselling author and keynote speaker whose work about positive leadership has inspired audiences around the world. His bestselling books include *The Energy Bus*, *The Carpenter*, *Training Camp*, *You Win in the Locker Room First* and *The*

Power of Positive Leadership. Gordon has been featured on The Today Show, CNN, CNBC, FOX, and more.

Josh Steimle is an author, speaker, and entrepreneur. His some 300 articles have been featured in publications such as Fortune, Time, Forbes, Inc., TechCrunch and more. Steimle is the CEO of MWI, a digital marketing agency with offices in Hong Kong, Singapore, China, the UK, and the US. He has been recognized by Forbes as one of the 25 Marketing Influencers to Watch in 2017.

Julian Treasure is a sound and communication expert and author of *How to be Heard* and *Sound Business*. Treasure has given five TED talks which have over 40 million views collectively. He is the founder of The Sound Agency, an award-winning audio-branding company. Treasure has 30 years of experience in advertising and publishing prior to The Sound Agency.

Juliet Funt is the CEO of WhiteSpace at Work and has a dynamic, engaging, and thought-provoking style. Her primary topics include sessions on how to improve execution by reclaiming white-space, and how to liberate talented teams from busywork and complexity. Juliet has a commanding stage presence and a clarity of thought that makes her a popular speaker wherever she goes.

Julie Winkle Giulioni is co-founder and principal of Design-Arounds, an author, and a speaker on a variety of topics including leadership, sales, performance improvement, and more. Julie

helps organizations deploy innovative training products to further enhance their business. She also provides businesses with out of the box solutions to deliver effective results.

Julius Solaris is the author of over 10 books on event technology and innovation. He is also the editor of Event Manager Blog, which is the number one blog worldwide for event professionals. He is the founder of the Event Innovation Lab an immersive training program for Fortune 500 companies and high growth event teams. Julius has also been named one of 25 most influential individuals in the Meeting Industry by Successful Meetings Magazine. I've had a good amount of exposure to Julius and can say without a doubt that his expertise, attention to detail, and ability to execute blogging best practices is second to none.

Jurgen Appelo refers to himself as a creative networker. He helps creative organizations adapt to the 21st century by offering tools, practices, and even games to better manager your business. Appelo is CEO of Happy Melly, a business network, and co-founder of the Agile Lean Europe and Stoos Network. He was recognized by Inc.com as a Top 50 Leadership Expert, Top 50 Leadership Innovator, and a Top 100 Great Leadership Speaker.

Karim Rashid is an award-winning designer of luxury goods for companies such as Umbra, Bobble, 3M, Samsung, Citibank, Sony, Kenzo, and more. Rashid's work can be seen in 20 perma-

nent collections and his art is on exhibit in galleries worldwide. He speaks at universities and conferences globally on the importance of design in everyday life.

Keith Barry is a world-renowned performer, hypnotist, and mentalist. Barry has been featured in over 40 international TV shows and has appeared on The Ellen Degeneres Show, Jimmy Kimmel, and The Conan O'Brien Show. He was awarded the Merlin Award for Mentalist of the Year in 2009 and voted the Best Magician in Las Vegas in 2009 by the Las Vegas Review Journal.

Kelly McGonigal is a lecturer and health psychologist at Stanford University and author of several books. McGonigal hopes to make a connection between psychology and neuroscience into strategies that support well-being. Her TED talk, "How to Make Stress Your Friend," has more than 10 million views and ranks as one of the 20 most viewed TED talks of all time.

Ken Blanchard is an author, speaker, and business consultant known for his groundbreaking research in leadership that transformed the day-to-day management of companies around the world. Blanchard has authored or coauthored 60 books and sold more than 21 million copies worldwide. His work includes *Raving Fans*, *The Secret*, and *Leading at a Higher Level*.

Ken Robinson works with companies of all shapes and sizes to unleash the creative energy of the people within them. He has led

projects both nationally and internationally and is recognized as the most watched speaker in TED talk history. In 2003, Robinson received a knighthood from Queen Elizabeth II for his service to the arts.

Kevin Carroll is the founder of Kevin Carroll Katalyst/LLC and the author of three highly successful books published by ESPN, Disney Press and McGraw-Hill. As an author, speaker and agent for social change (a.k.a. the Katalyst), it is Kevin's "job" to inspire businesses, organizations and individuals - from CEOs and employees of Fortune 500 companies to schoolchildren - to embrace their spirit of play and creativity to maximize their human potential and sustain more meaningful business and personal growth.

Kevin Plank was a special teams captain of the University of Maryland football team. Tired of repeatedly changing the cotton T-shirt under his jersey as it became wet and heavy during the course of a game, Mr. Plank set out to develop a next generation shirt that would remain drier and lighter. He created a new category of sporting apparel called performance apparel, and built Under Armour into a leading developer, marketer, and distributor of branded performance apparel, footwear and accessories.

Kurt Warner was the NFL quarterback who made a big impact on both the Super Bowl-winning St. Louis Rams as well as the Arizona Cardinals. He started the First Things First foundation and

is now an inspirational speaker at events and conferences around the globe.

Lolly Daskal is an executive leadership coach with expertise across 14 countries. Daskal is founder and CEO of Lead From Within, a program for leadership made for leaders looking to enhance performance and make improvements within their business. She was recognized by Inc.com as a Top 50 Leadership and Management Expert, 100 Great Leadership Speaker by Inc. Magazine, and The Most Inspiring Woman in the World by the Huffington Post.

Lon Safko is an innovator, inventor, bestselling author, speaker, trainer, consultant, and is the creator of the “First Computer To Save A Human Life” as coined by Steve Jobs, Apple, Inc. That computer, along with 18 of Lon’s inventions are part of the permanent collection of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. along with 30,000 of Lon’s personal papers. Lon also has 14 inventions in the collection of The Computer History Museum. Lon is a renowned international speaker, teaching the world’s largest companies how to harness innovative thinking, social media, and digital communications. I’ve seen Lon speak and he provides a depth of content that is hard to match.

Malcolm Gladwell is an author and speaker who has written numerous books, including The Tipping Point; Blink; Outliers; and

David and Goliath. He is also host of the podcast Revisionist History. Gladwell's books and articles often deal with unexpected implications of research in the social sciences and make frequent and extended use of academic work, particularly in the areas of sociology, psychology, and social psychology.

Mark Samuel is a Thought Leader and CEO of IMPAQ, an award-winning international consulting firm that guides organizations in achieving measurable breakthrough results within six months through a unique system that links Execution, Culture and Deliverables. Mark is the best selling author of the acclaimed *Creating the Accountable Organization* and the award-winning book, *Making Yourself Indispensable: the Power of Personal Accountability*.

Mari Smith is often referred to as "the Queen of Facebook" and is one of the world's foremost experts on Facebook marketing. She is a Forbes' perennial Top Social Media Power Influencer and the author of *The New Relationship Marketing* and coauthor of *Facebook Marketing: An Hour A Day*. In 2015, Facebook headhunted Mari to partner with as the company's leading Small Business and Facebook Marketing expert, where she facilitated and taught at the Boost Your Business series of live training events across the United States. I've seen Mari speak and consider her a friend. She's a bundle of energy and, like me, spent part of her life living in the U.K.

Matthew E. May is an innovation strategist and speaker who works with executives and their teams to create new strategies for their business. May worked for eight years as an advisor to Toyota, which enabled him to publish *The Elegant Solution*, a 2006 bestselling book about their innovative methods. May is now author of five books and his work has been featured in The New York Times, Harvard Business Review, Rotman Magazine, Fast Company and more.

Michael Brenner is a bestselling author and widely recognized keynote speaker who covers topics ranging from leadership to culture and marketing. His book *The Content Formula* has been featured by *The Economist*, *The Guardian*, and *Entrepreneur Magazine*. Brenner is the CEO of Marketing Insider Group, where he believes strong leaders are the key to unlimited growth. I've seen Michael speak and he's a good acquaintance. He's smart, engaging, and provides in-depth information in a warm and friendly fashion.

Michael Gelb is a pioneer in creative thinking, innovative leadership, and executive coaching. He offers more than 30 years of experience as a seminar leader, professional speaker, and coach to a variety of clientele. His clients include Emerson, Microsoft, Nike, and more. Gelb is the author of 14 books including the in-

ternational bestseller, *How to Think Like Leonardo Da Vinci: 7 Steps to Genius Every Day*.

[Michael Hyatt](#) runs the top leadership blog in the world with almost 500,000 visitors a month. His podcast gets 300,000 downloads each month and he has over 120,000 fans on Facebook. It's safe to say that Michael is a busy guy. If you're looking for a leadership speaker that's built on a foundation of kindness and humility, Michael is your guy. A really top-notch speaker and human being.

[Michael Port](#) is an author, professional speaker, and entrepreneur. He has written six books, including *Book Yourself Solid* and *Steal the Show*. His books have been bestsellers on the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, USA Today and Publishers Weekly. I have 3 friends who have taken Michael's course for speaking and all of them have said it was a worthwhile investment, even though it costs, like, a gazillion dollars. (I believe Michael has courses that cost less than a gazillion dollars, but the main point is that I have 3 friends who made the investment and came away very happy, so it must be very, very good.)

[Michael Solomon](#) is an author, speaker, and leading expert on understanding consumers. His textbooks on consumer behavior, social media marketing, advertising, and marketing are required reading in business schools around the world. His book, *Con-*

sumer Behavior: Buying, Having, and Being is the most widely-used textbook on consumer behavior in the world. I've had the pleasure of getting to know Michael via phone and email – he's super smart, super nice, and an all around decent guy. He also has an excellent reputation as a class act.

Mike Abrashoff is a former commander, author, thought leader and co-owner of Aegis Performance Group. Abrashoff teaches people to think differently about how they lead and the organizational structure of their business. He inspires leaders to focus on what they can influence and not to dwell on what can't be controlled.

Mike Michalowicz founded and sold two multi-million dollar companies by the time he was 35 and then proceeded to lose his fortune. Convinced that there must be a better way, he created the Profit First Formula, a way for businesses to ensure profitability from their very next deposit forward. Mike is a popular keynote speaker and is the author of several books on business.

Nadia Bilchik has been in demand as a speaker for over 25 years. She draws on her vast experience at the frontline of broadcasting to reveal the secrets of more powerful communication. She has anchored for MNET TV South Africa as well as hosted a variety of shows for CNN International and Weekend Passport on CNN. During her career she has interviewed key political figures

and entertainers such as Nelson Mandela, George Clooney and Tom Hanks. Her background has given her extraordinary understanding of communication to small and large audiences both in person and on camera.

Nina Godiwalla is CEO of Mindworks Leadership and bestselling author of *Suits: A Woman on Wall Street*. The NY Times coined Godiwalla as “The Devil Wears Prada” of investment banking. She is an internationally recognized leadership speaker often sought out by prominent institutions such as The White House, Harvard Business School, NASA, and TED Conference. In 2012, Godiwalla was invited to serve on the Leadership Roundtable by the White House.

Robert Kiyosaki is best known as the author of *Rich Dad Poor Dad*—the #1 personal finance book of all time. Mr. Kiyosaki has challenged and changed the way tens of millions of people around the world think about money. He is an entrepreneur, educator, and investor who believes that each of us has the power to make changes in our lives, take control of our financial future, and live the rich life we deserve.

Robert Waldinger is a Harvard psychiatrist, Zen priest, and psychoanalyst. He directs the [Harvard Study of Adult Development](#), which is possibly the longest study of adult life ever done. For 75 years, his team (and their predecessors) tracked the lives of 724

men. Year after year, they asked about their work, their home lives, and their health—trying to determine what makes for a meaningful and healthy life. Dr. Waldinger shares the answer on his website and in his speeches.

Sally Hogshead is a New York Times bestselling author and CEO of Fascinate. She started her career in advertising and created some of the nation's best-known campaigns. Sally was inducted into the National Speakers Association Hall of Fame in 2012. Her style is both engaging and interactive and Sally is often ranked as one of the top speakers at events she speaks at.

Sam Glenn had one of the most negative and self defeating attitudes you would have ever encountered, but something happened that changed everything! It was a chance encounter at a buffet, where Sam accidentally knocked over the legendary Zig Ziglar nearly 23 years ago. This led to a positive friendship between the two and with Zig's encouragement, Sam got on track in a new direction for his life. Today Sam Glenn is known as The Authority on Attitude and highly recognized in the speaking industry as one of the most captivating kick off and wrap up general session speakers.

Sanjiv Chopra wants to inspire others to live healthier, balanced lives and to make a difference in this world by leading. In his book, *Leadership by Example*, he illustrates the ten core princi-

ples of effective leadership. According to Dr. Chopra, all of us have the potential to become exemplary leaders at many levels. To do so, we must have a sense of purpose, dare to dream big, and live a life of integrity so that others will be inspired to embark on their own leadership journey. Dr. Chopra was mentioned several times during our research.

Sarah Sladek is a best-selling author and CEO of XYZ University. She brings her expertise to 40+ events a year, presenting to audiences worldwide on how to drive stronger engagement with younger generations. Audiences rave about her ability to deliver information in entertaining and provocative ways, blending pop culture with best practices, trend forecasting, research, and strategy.

Seth Godin is the author of 18 books that have been bestsellers around the world and have been translated into more than 35 languages. He writes about the post-industrial revolution, the way ideas spread, marketing, quitting, leadership and most of all, changing everything. You might be familiar with his books *Linchpin*, *Tribes*, *The Dip* and *Purple Cow*. Not long ago, Seth once again set the book publishing industry on its ear by launching a series of four books via Kickstarter. The campaign reached its

goal after three hours and ended up becoming the most successful book project ever done this way.

[Scott Kelley](#) is a former military fighter pilot and test pilot, an engineer, a retired astronaut, and a retired U.S. Navy Captain. A veteran of four space flights, Kelly commanded the International Space Station on three expedition and was a member of the year-long mission to the ISS. I've read his book, and he comes highly recommended from our research. If his speeches are half as good as his book, you're going to be in excellent hands.

[Scott Whitehair](#) has been seen/heard on NPR, PBS, WGN Radio, FOX-TV, Sirius XM, and The Risk Podcast. He is a two-time Moth Slam winner and runner up at The 2012 Windy City All-City Story Slam Championship. In 2017, he made his debut with Exchange Place at The National Storytelling Festival. His work ranges from the heartbreaking to the hilarious, and he has personal stories for both an afternoon with a child in your lap and a late night with a cocktail in your hand.

[Shawn Achor](#) is one of the world's leading experts on the connection between happiness and success. His research on mindset made the cover of *Harvard Business Review*, his [TED talk](#) is one of the most popular of all time with over 13 million views, and his lecture airing on PBS has been seen by millions. Shawn is the

author of *New York Times* best-selling books *The Happiness Advantage* (2010) and *Before Happiness* (2013). He has now lectured in more than 50 countries speaking to CEOs in China, doctors in Dubai, schoolchildren in South Africa, and farmers in Zimbabwe.

[Simon T. Bailey](#) is a best-selling author, a Hall of Fame speaker, and the CEO of Simon T. Bailey International, Inc., a company specializing in creating learning and development opportunities for individuals and organizations. Several people in our research mentioned Simon, whose purpose is to teach 1 Billion people how to be brilliant in an average world. His latest creation is the Shift Your Brilliance System which instills the mindset needed to thrive in the 21st century. He is one of America's Top Ten Most Booked Corporate and Association Speakers on the subjects of brilliance, leadership, and customer service.

[Simon Sinek](#) is a super popular speaker and thought leader right now. To find out why, just read one of his books or watch one of the numerous videos on YouTube. A trained ethnographer, Simon is fascinated by the leaders and companies that make the greatest impact within their organizations and in the world — those with the capacity to inspire. He has devoted his life to sharing his thinking in order to help other leaders and organizations inspire action.

Steve Farber is the president of Extreme Leadership and the founder of The Extreme Leadership Institute. Both organizations are devoted to the cultivation and development of Extreme Leaders in the business community, non-profits and education. His third book, *Greater Than Yourself: The Ultimate Lesson In Leadership*, was a Wall Street Journal and USA Today bestseller. His second book, *The Radical Edge: Stoke Your Business, Amp Your Life, and Change the World*, was hailed as “a playbook for harnessing the power of the human spirit.” And his first book, *The Radical Leap: A Personal Lesson in Extreme Leadership*, is already considered a classic in the leadership field.

Stuart Knight has written, produced and starred in live presentations that have been seen by over one million people and each year speaks internationally helping some of the world’s biggest companies reach new levels of success. When he is not on the road speaking, you may have seen or heard him on some of Canada’s biggest TV and Radio stations where he is often asked for his expert opinion on high level communication. He is the author of two profound books, *You Should Have Asked – The Art of Powerful Conversation* and *The Madness of My Mind* and writes a weekly blog that has over ten thousand followers.

Tamsen Webster is an acclaimed keynote speaker, “idea whisperer,” and message strategist. She combined 20 years in market-

ing with 13 years as a Weight Watchers leader into a simple structure for understanding, talking about, and creating lasting change. She's the Executive Producer of the oldest and one of the largest locally organized TED talk events in the world, and an in-demand consultant on finding the ideas that move people to action. She was a reluctant marathoner...twice; is a winning ballroom dancer (in her mind); and everything she knows about people, speaking, and change, she learned at Weight Watchers. True story.

[Ted Wright](#) has been at the forefront of Word of Mouth Marketing since he helped re-ignite the Pabst Blue Ribbon brand in 2000. Over the last decade, his agency has become a global leader in Word of Mouth Marketing with clients on every continent. Often called the best WOMM speaker working today, Ted has won numerous public speaking awards for his talks on WOMM and always elicits more questions than a Q&A can handle. An alumnus of Booz Allen & Hamilton, Ted holds an MBA with honors from The University of Chicago. He also enjoys great bourbon and drives too fast, but never at the same time.

[Tim David](#) is best known for his wildly entertaining delivery style and mastery of presenting information in a way that is remembered and applied long after he leaves the building. His work has been featured in Harvard Business Review, PsychologyToday.com, Huffington Post, Forbes, the NY Times, the Chicago Tribune, the

Today Show, Investor's Business Daily, and hundreds of other news and media outlets around the world. He also hosts The Studies Show Podcast. I had the opportunity to watch Tim speak at an event not to long ago. Not only was his speech highly engaging, his message was thought provoking and meaningful, too. I'm reading one of his books right now and got to know him at the event -- he's a super smart and genuinely nice guy.

Terry Bradshaw is one of the greatest quarterbacks in NFL history. He was the first player selected in the 1970 NFL draft and went on to great success with the Pittsburgh Steelers. During his 14-year career, Mr. Bradshaw helped take his team to the Super Bowl several times and earned four Super Bowl rings. For a variety of reasons, we left most celebrities off our list of top motivational speakers, but he was mentioned several times during in our research so we decided to include him.

Viveka von Rosen is one of the world's leading LinkedIn experts. If you're looking for someone to inspire your audience to use social media and LinkedIn to its fullest potential, you can't go wrong with Viveka. Her engaging style and genuine warmth make her one of the more popular social media speakers on the planet. Audiences love her and her sense of humor and charm come across very well on stage.

Vince Poscente teaches others how to be more resilient and how to overcome obstacles. When you bounce back stronger than ever, confidence and fun goes up. Vince's client list includes world class organizations dedicated to being bigger and better. When employees and entrepreneurs handle set-backs, supersede obstacles and are more focused - record setting results happen faster than expected.

A final note about this research

As mentioned, we used both qualitative and quantitative research to conduct this study. That's not to say it's the perfect list -- there's a top motivational speaker somewhere who was surely left off. Our apologies for that.

You'll also notice that we left off some of the world's best-known speakers -- people like Tony Robbins, Deepak Chopra, and various politicians or celebrities. That was intentional since you already know about them.

The idea for this research was based on a blog post by my friend Michael Brenner, who created a list of his own based on the top marketing speakers. Thank you, Micheal, for letting me borrow your idea.

If you're an event planner, conference planner or meeting planner who would like to suggest an additional name for this list, please feel free to email me at Jamie.Turner@SIXTY.Company.



About Jamie Turner

Jamie Turner is an internationally recognized author, [speaker](#), and Founder of the International Speakers Association. He speaks about business, digital media, and leadership at events, conferences, and corporations around the globe. He has been profiled in

one of the world's best selling marketing textbooks, is the author of several business books, and can be seen regularly as a contributor on network TV news programs. He can be reached at +1-678-313-3472 or via email at Jamie@JamieTurner.Live.